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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: January 17, 1952

SUBJECT: 1. Membership
2. Anti-Semitism in the USSR
3. Israeli Relations with Polish Delegation

PARTICIPANTS:
Gideon Rafael, Israeli Delegation
Thomas J. Cory, US Delegation

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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1. At a social occasion last night, Mr. Rafael informed me that the Soviet Delegation has spoken to his Delegation concerning membership and he believes it also has spoken to other "neutralist" delegations, although he understands that the Soviet position is still rather flexible because the USSR has been unable as yet to ascertain full details regarding Latin American thinking on the subject. To his delegation, Mr. Rafael said, the Soviet Delegation spoke in terms of a "European package on membership" which would consist on the one hand of Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Albania, and on the other Italy, Eire, Portugal, and Austria with, if other delegations so wish, Finland to be added as a final inducement acceptable to both the Soviet and non-Soviet blocs.

2. During the course of the conversation, I had occasion to speak of my own observations of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and in particular of the status of the Jews in Birobidzhan, the Jewish Autonomous Region in the Soviet Far East. Mr. Rafael endorsed all I had to say on the subject and added some views of his own. He said that the Israeli Counselor in Moscow recently came to Paris and that Mr. Rafael spent more than three hours with him discussing the subject and learning first hand details of the truly miserable condition of the Soviet Jews. Mr. Rafael said that Anti-Semitism is increasing in the USSR. He offered the comment that recently Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett touched on the subject of Soviet anti-Semitism with Vyshinsky. According to Mr. Rafael, Vyshinsky made the standard responses pointing to the Soviet treatment of minorities, to the Jewish Autonomous Region, to the Jewish press and theatre, etc., as examples of the allegedly kindly manner in which the Soviet State treats its minorities. Mr. Rafael continued that Foreign Minister Sharett brushed these examples aside as being theoretical and guided the conversation into a discussion of the factual situation of Jews in the USSR, offering specific examples to support his criticisms of Soviet policy. Mr. Rafael claimed that Foreign Minister Sharett

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forced Vyshinsiy into a state of considerable embarrassment.

3. I asked Mr. Rafael when and if he thought Soviet anti-Semitism would carry over into Poland and particularly what kind of effect it would have on the Polish Delegation which, I observed, seems exclusively composed of Jews. Mr. Rafael said he thinks it is only a matter of time before the Slavic Poles, who are themselves anti-Semitic, exert under Soviet direction a growing pressure on Jews within the Polish Government and the Communist party. He continued that this prospect is perhaps the reason for the attention and interest being devoted this year by the Polish Delegates -- particularly Messrs. Wierblowski, Katz-Suchy, Lachs, and Boratynsky -- to the Israel Delegation. He contrasted the present Polish attitude with that of a year ago when, he said, the Polish Delegation seemed at a loss as to how to deal with the Israel Delegation. Mr. Rafael said it seemed to him quite possible that these Delegates are trying to improve their personal relations so as to ensure asylum in Israel in case their political fortunes change in Poland. Mr. Rafael added that Dr. Julius Katz-Suchy's brother is an ardent Zionist now residing in Palestine and working for one of the Israeli press agencies.

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